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Travel Diary: May 20, 1914

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~~April~~ ^{MAY} 20, 1914.

We left Huigra at six o'clock in the morning of Thursday, May 14th, Lucy and I going with Mr. Henderson on a hand car down the winding valley with the river Chanchan as far as Naranjapata, the whole journey being made by the force of gravity with the brakes on much of the time. It was very exhilarating and the scenery beautiful, as the vegetation gradually grew more and more luxuriant, with more frequent palms and banana trees. Then we got on the train and continued past Bucay and through the various wretched villages, reaching Duran at 11 o'clock. All this country had been under water on the way up two months before: now it was mostly dry, showing that there was solid soil for pasturage and crops. It seems that between the Guayas river and two other streams which join a good many miles up the line from Duran, there is a space of perhaps 150 ^{thousand} acres pre-eminently suited to rice cultivation. With dredges, canals could be put through to drain the territory. The earth dredged out could be used to form the dikes, and the canals could be used to lighter the rice straight from the fields to the sides of ships at Guayaquil. This would only necessitate enterprise, capital, and such suitable labor as the Japanese, for instance, would afford, to make the most paying rice plantations, perhaps, in the world. And yet Ecuador imports rice from Peru! The pearl fisheries on the coast are, it seems, another Ecuadorean industry that lies practically dormant.

On the 85,000 acre tract of which he is part owner, Mr. Henderson has set up a small saw mill for the exploitation of the timber which chiefly covers it. He has also a good number of coffee trees.

Of course the deterrents to Ecuadorean enterprise are the utterly unreliable character of the people, the hopeless political conditions, the anti-American and anti-foreign sentiment, the export duties, and the habit of Ecuadorean governments to see enterprises started and then to take the position that those interested ought to have little or no profit and that the govern-

ment should seize everything through taxation.

I failed to gain a clear idea of the scope of the Ecuadorean Corporation. I think it has British and French capital, with American capital probably in a minority, and that among other things it has the Guayaquil breweries, the Quito tramways, one Quito electric light plant, real estate holdings north of the Ejido, and what else I know not. An inviting speculation would be the acquisition of the land just down the river from Guayaquil, where the city is bound to expand. Indeed, in a country where bank stocks purchased at market value bring about 14%, there is no lack of tempting fields of investment, were it not for the rotten conditions abovementioned as deterrents.

The collection and exportation of ivory nuts used in the making of buttons are in the hands of a German in Hamburg who is known as the "ivory nut king", and whose agent in Ecuador, Mr. Ponto, we have met on the steamer. His headquarters are at Bahia de Caraquez, where he has five or six young Germans under him, and has managed to live with his wife comfortably for ten years, building up and extending this great business.

In Guayaquil the principal shops are German. From Callao there are through steamers through the Straits to Hamburg, taking sixty days. One is filled with admiration at the splendid methodical German enterprise everywhere in evidence. To extend our trade, young Americans with native ability but poor prospects at home must be given the idea that by commercial emigration and a willingness to spend twenty or thirty years abroad, with occasional vacations at home, they can live in greater luxury and with more interesting work and prospects than at home, can have interesting experiences and make positions of respect and standing for themselves, and ultimately retire with reasonable fortunes. Then there must be established for them schools scientifically teaching foreign banking and commerce, and foreign languages and customs.

The cocoa trade of Ecuador is largely controlled by the English, but the Brazilians, with an inferior variety, are strongly

At Duran, the gloomy and ramshackle quarters of the railway, we had lunch with Mr. Harman, and after a long wait until the Mantaro got in, we took the launch over to Guayaquil and met the genial Mr. John Paget, and then went with Mr. Henderson to two large stores, both German, to look for Panama hats, but failed to find them at acceptable prices.

Guayaquil makes rather a good impression. The stores are in arcades which line the streets, which seem infinitely cleaner than those in Quito. We cut our stroll short because Henderson had things to do and the launch was waiting, and boarded the "Mantaro" about 3.30 o'clock. We did not sail until the next morning at eight o'clock. The night was delightfully cool, requiring blankets, and there were scarcely any mosquitoes. Apparently Guayaquil has an agreeable climate from May until November.

Coming down the river we saw the island whose silhouette so resembles a corpse laid out for burial, and passing the mouth of the Gulf about 3 P. M., we began our journey southwards, but too far out to see more than the outline of the coast.

The next day, the 16th, we were at Payta at 8 A. M., confronted by a drab colored sandy coast with wind-swept bluffs of packed sand, backed with sandy mounds, and in the distance barren mountains up to the first outline of the Cordilleras, beyond which in the distance could be seen the sweep of the higher mountains. There was a steel pier, and back of it a little village of apparently light tinted and frail wooden buildings. This description will suffice for Eten, which we reached the next morning, except that there no houses could be seen from the sea, and for Pacasmayo, which we reached that afternoon, and Salaverry, which we reached the morning of the 18th. At these ports we took on rice, rice bran, sugar and cattle, discharging water pipes, railway wheels, and a little machinery. It seems there are short railways running inland from these points, to the long valley behind the first rim of mountains, where rice and sugar are grown in great

soda ash
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quantities, and where the irrigated land is twenty to thirty miles from the beach, except at points where the debauching of a mountain river has extended the irrigation sometimes to within three or four miles of the coast. There is a heavy swell at these places, which have no ports, and passengers are hoisted aboard in an arrangement like the frame of a wooden swing, and cattle by means of ropes around and under them, with wooden boards on their sides to break the impact against the ship, - a process not too humane.

Yesterday morning about nine o'clock we came up to the Island of San Lorenzo into the broad, vague harbor of Callao, protected on the north by that Island and it seems needing no protection from the north and west. There is a lot of shipping, including a good deal of old junk, an American cable ship, some cement wharves, behind which, in slips, many steamers lie. Since this is winter, and it is chilly and cloudy, through the mist one gets only a hazy impression of a flat shipping town and across the plain, about half an hour by trolley or train, the city of Lima is not visible.

I talked with two young men named Yrarrázaval Garcia Moreno. Gabriel, the elder, has spent his life in France, having been through St. Cyr. Their father was Chilean minister in Paris. Their mother was the daughter of the celebrated President of Ecuador, whose father, it seems, was born in Spain, and whose mother, although born in Ecuador, was of pure Spanish blood. The younger brother was at Cambridge and speaks English. They come every nine years to Ecuador to sign contracts to lease their cocoa estate to certain prosperous cholos, two brothers who have rings on their fingers and bells on their toes and take turns managing their estates and enjoying life in Europe alternately. Yrarrázaval told me that his uncle, Garcia Moreno, a man of 45, had been left an orphan very young, and that when he was five years old a price of Sucre 1,000 was placed on his head. His house has been burned three times and some 5000 of his cattle stolen. Meanwhile he had lived on his hacienda eight miles from

Quito, and has made it a beautiful one through his skill and energy. He is surrounded by Indians who adore him and call him El Nino and kneel down when they see him, and he fathers and doctors them in the most patriarchal fashion. He has been to the United States two or three times. President Garcia Moreno studied in France and England. Y said that his name had been anathema for years, but that now, tired of turmoil, many Ecuadorians longed for a similar man. Y said he would like to go to Ecuador and try to accomplish something, but that the country was utterly impossible. As a matter of fact, he is hurrying to Paris for the Grand Prix. He saw in Guayaquil printed placards on the walls calling on the Ecuadoreans to stand by Mexico, etc. Under them had been written, "Debemos cemar el consulado", and another sentence meaning that they must also burn the consul up with his establishment. It is a fact also that there was a clamor in Guayaquil in favor of crossing to Duran and destroying the railway offices and killing the Americans there. Mr. Woods, late of Mexico (1912), inspecting engineer, and a husky 6 foot 3 gringo of good type, had told me of this, and had said that ~~is~~ sixty Ecuadoreans had come over to kill the seven Americans of whom he was one that evening, there would have been an enormous number of Ecuadoreans who would not have gone home again. This same Woods gave me the American railway engineer viewpoint on Mexico. He describes Bryan as "a bunch of rhubarb", due to I know not what prejudice against that innocent herb. He said the engineers in Ecuador had sent some cables home and wished they might have a few weeks notice, as they all felt they would like to head the procession into Mexico. He told of having lent fifty pesos to a Mexican laborer, and of later meeting the same laborer during an excitement shouting, "Death to the Yankees". Expostulating with him, the man explained that he would go to any length to defend him, his friend, and questioned could give no reason for his shouting except that such and such a politician had told him to. Mr. Woods has a poor opinion of spiggottys in general, and of the Mexicans in particular.

Mr. MacIntyre, a frailly built little Scotchman, formerly a collector, was another type we met. He told of experiences with the refusal of Ecuadoreans to pay their fare, the failure of the police to make them pay or get off, and his logical obligation then to throw them off. He mentioned one row where a railway policeman named Paredes stood by him, and had a sword duel in the car with an Ecuadorean officer, afterwards continued outside until Paredes was wounded. In the same fracas MacIntyre had to draw his revolver to prevent a couple of Ecuadorean soldiers from using their rifles. A tranquil little life these gringos have in Ecuador. Yrarrazaval said the United States ought to take Ecuador, and that many of the best people, including young men in Guayaquil, had said to him that they would be glad of an American protectorate. I said, "No, thank you". He said a man could take 3000 Chilean rotos and take the whole country; that the Ecuadorean soldiers were cowards except when drunk, (which they frequently were, and always on Saturday and Sunday, and that at those times Ecuadorean laborers were entirely unruly, even to their employers on the plantations, and were quite given to drawing the machete.

Yesterday morning Mr. G. Cisneros y Raygada, Introdutor de Ministros, arrived bright and early with a courteous message of welcome from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and sat talking with us for a couple of hours. He asked of our plans, and said they would make a little scheme for our sightseeing, and would consult the Legation to see if it was satisfactory to them. He seemed surprised that no one from the Legation had been on board. This phenomenon was explained today, when I was able to gather that poor Pennoyer had wanted to come on board, but found the attitude of his chief so peculiar that he had refrained. It is evident that old man McMillin, because of my issue with the President, considers me rather taboo, which is decidedly amusing, and contrasts with the very courteous attentions of the Ministers at Panama and Quito, understood to be equally rabid Bryanites.

This morning I met Mr. East, the Manager of the Peruvian

most kind in offering a launch and proposing to arrange for us to stop at the house of a friend on the way to Cerro de Pasco. Then came Handley, who had failed to receive our telegram. He says his telegrams are often held up two or three days.

It seems we just missed the latest political crisis. During the last months Colonel Benavides had three times called Congress, but failed to get a quorum, I understand, because his own party, the bloquistas, failed to come. This time he promised the Leguistas to send the two Peruvian naval vessels along the coast to bring the senators and deputies, and all hands came. The hour of assembly was set at 3.30 P. M. The Leguistas numbered 90, a majority. Thirty-eight of them made their way to the chamber in the forenoon, the rest remaining with Leguia in his house. An hour or more before the appointed time the minority group arrived in force, organized the Houses in joint session, and passed the law making Benavides president for a year and a half pending new elections. The Leguistas who had arrived were in the corridor, and were not allowed to go in the chamber, and at the same time were not permitted to leave, so that their fellows could not be advised. The latter on arrival were not admitted. One or two broke in and protested. Durand and some others escaped through windows, and finally the whole 90, including the Speaker, met at Leguia's house and elected him President. They claimed that they had a majority, but it is not proven. Leguia issued many official documents, including proclamations to the effect that no debts incurred by the alleged government would be honored by him; communications to the Supreme Court, to the legations, etc., and also that the collection of revenue by the Benavides government would not be recognized as legal.

All this was last Friday, the 15th. Some two or three thousand troops were drawn up in the street, armed even with artillery, and the coup d'etat was carried off without a shout or the slightest disturbance. Already Leguia is in hiding in Lima, and many of his senators and deputies have been put in the penitentiary. Some were taken yesterday from a departing steamer. The trickery of

Benavides, after announcing previously that he was not a politician, did not desire the Presidency, and only wished to serve the country, is reacting against him, and the idea seems to be that the opposition deputies will want to go home and try to start a revolution in the interior. Meanwhile, the government is hard up and wants a foreign loan, and the question of recognition by the Powers is undecided.

It all sounds very Ecuadorean, and Mr. James Bosworth, Traffic Manager of W. R. Grace & Co. here, who spent much of the afternoon with us, tells me that when President Leguia escaped assassination, he was hauled out in the street and buffeted about and finally ordered to sign his resignation at the point of a revolver, but refused and was saved by some soldiers, - thus escaping by nerve and luck a tragedy along lines of barbarity quite worthy of Quito. It is now said that no written resignation by Billinghurst can be found, so that perhaps the situation is this: We have Billinghurst as President, Leguia as President as constitutional successor from the vice-presidency; we have Leguia as claiming to be elected by the real majority of the Congress; and, fourth, we have Benavides elected by the minority of Congress, which, supported by the army, compelled the majority, and it is claimed including the Speaker, to hold a rump convention. The Speaker, Ricardo Bentin, a man of 65 and rather imposing, is generally considered as honorable in every sense. It is probable that he was subject to certain bloquista influences, for he attended the House in the early morning, and returned to his home for luncheon. While there he was advised of the bloquistas having advanced the hour for the convening of the House to 2.30 o'clock, so that the election of Benavides as Provisional President was undertaken during the Speaker's absence.

The history of Peru since 1885 is full of instances similar to that which has been described above. Iglesias, the Peruvian who met with the approval of the Chilean army of occupation, was President from 1883-1885. Andres Caceres, by a coup d'etat, forced the resignation of Iglesias, and was himself chosen

President by a Council of Minister, taking the oath of office on June 3rd, 1886, and serving his full term, which expired in 1890. He was succeeded by Colonel Barmudez, who had been declared elected, and who served from 1890 until his death in 1894, before the completion of his full term. He was succeeded by General Borgono, the second vice-president, who usurped supreme command against the legal right of Doctor Pedro del Solar, the first vice-president. Owing to the illegality of Borgono's assumption of office, trouble resulted, and after he had been in office three months Congress dissolved and elections were held, Caceres being again proclaimed President in 1894, on August 10th. He was in office for less than a year when he was attacked by Piérrola, and after much fighting and bloodshed in the streets of Lima, Caceres was defeated. Civil control took the place of military, and a provisional committee for government was formed. A general election was then held, and Nicolas Piérrola was declared president. Piérrola served his full term, disturbed in part by Durand, and retired in 1899. Durand has been causing trouble ever since. Piérrola was succeeded by Eduardo de Romaña after a regular election, and served the full term. Elections were held and Manuel Candamo was chosen President in May, 1903, but died in office in May, 1904. The first vice-president having died also, the second vice-president, Calderon, succeeded. According to law, elections were held, and after Calderon had served three months, he was succeeded by the newly elected President, José Pardo, in September, 1904, who served until 1908. Pardo was followed in 1908 by Agosto Leguia, who served his full term. Durand attacked him once or twice, and it was rather an unruly administration, and rather important in view of the present conditions. Durand ^{Leguia} ~~was~~ attacked in May, 1908, and during 1909 Leguia was attacked in the Palace by Piérrola and a few men and walked about the streets. This was the time he refused to sign his resignation. He was rescued by some troops who were not party to the attempt to overthrow him and was taken back to the Palace the same day. When the attempt was made to force his resignation, he was surround

ed in the street by soldiers, and it is said that a very large negro had been specially detailed to guard him. In the firing that took place the negro was shot and fell against Leguia, knocking him to the ground. A sharpshooter was on the corner, kneeling down, I am told, and saw Leguia through the legs of the men attempting to rise. He aimed and fired at Leguia, and just as he fired Leguia's hand, which was in a pool of the negro's blood, slipped and he again fell flat, so that the bullet passed over him. He then lay still until rescued. The people were looking from the balconies, and there seemed to be among the revolutionary clique (a dozen or two men) no definite plan as to what they should do with Leguia. Immediately on his return to the Palace I have been told that the very ones who were passive onlookers to the indignities to which he was subjected by the mob were among the first to call upon him at the Palace (in the invariable morning coat, ~~fr~~ top hat, etc) and to offer their congratulations upon his escape.

Billinghurst was elected in 1912, and served until the 4th of February, 1914. On the 4th of February the junta took charge and served until the 15th of May, when Benavides, who had been President and Minister of War in the junta, was proclaimed provisional president on the 15th of May, under the circumstances beforementioned.

(Political history needs verification)